

Chief Tabby

Taken from book:

"Heart Throbs of
the West," Vol 1:

94-97 (Note Vol. 1 is
loaded c Indian history)

Chief Tabby

was brother to:

Chief Walker

Chief Aprapene

Chief Sanpitch

Chief Sowiette



Chief Tabby (Tabby) under whose guidance the Utes moved to the
Uintah Indian Reservations. A town in that area preserves his name.
Photo USHS

"These were the Utes," p 169

CHIEF TABBY

In June 1865, President Young together with Government Indian Agents, met the chiefs of the Utah Indians to sign a treaty providing that the Indians would move to the Uintah Reservation to make their homes.

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Among the important chiefs who signed this treaty was Tabby, who afterwards became the leader of the Indians on the reservation.

Tabby was a brother of Walker and Arapene, as well as Sanpitch. He is remembered by many of the settlers of Wasatch County and Duchesne County, and they always speak of him as a chief who desired peace. On several occasions he came to Salt Lake City, declaring that he wanted to live in harmony with the white people. Daniel W. Jones, one of the many writers who have written about Tabby, gives one of the best sketches in telling of his dealings with this well known chief.

Daniel W. Jones asked permission of some of the authorities to go to the Indians as a friend and talk with them, and chose the reservation as his field of labor. Upon his arrival he was notified that if he did not leave in three days he would be killed. Tabby sent word saying:

"You are an old friend, but the Mormons have killed many of my people; you are a Mormon, and if you stay here you will be killed. Some are mad because I do not want you killed at once. Now hurry and get ready, for I do not want to see you die."

Jones went on making saddles to sell to the Indians, having the excuse that he needed a few more days to finish his work. One day Tabby and his squaw came to the shop, and without speaking to Jones, gave him a few odd jobs to do.

"Tabby stood straight and silent, hardly moving. He then took from his squaw some buckskin and without a word laid them on my bench. I commenced cleaning up, giving my bench a general straightening. When I came to the buckskins I handled them as though they were trash in my way, and asked the squaw if she would take care of them. At this Tabby laughed, holding out his hand in a friendly way, saying, 'All right, we are friends, and it is foolish for us not to talk and be as we used to be.'"

Tabby then told Mr. Jones that it was the desire of the Indians to be friendly with the settlers, but said that he, himself, felt bad about the killing of his half brother as did the rest of the Indians. They held grievances against the agents who had charge of the reservation also. Whether the Indians were justified in their accusations we are not prepared to say, but we want to study their side of the story. On August 21, 1872, we read of Tabby fighting for justice for his people. This is taken from the Salt Lake Herald:

"At 11 a. m. a large number of Indians assembled with their chiefs, Tabby, Douglass, To-quoon, Won-da-ro-des, John, of Kanosh's band, Joe, of Payson, and Antero. General Morrow, Superintendent Dodge, and Indian Agent, Critchlow; also Bishops Smoot and Bringham, and Generals Thurber and Pace, were present. General Morrow said he was glad to meet so many of his Indian friends. The Utes and whites had been together so long he thought they ought to feel as one family. The 'great father' at Washington had sent him to hold a council, and he wished them to tell him all their troubles. Douglass and Tabby said they wanted peace, and agreed to go to the reservation as required. They said that the agents had not furnished them what they promised; and that Colonel Irish had told

them a mighty big lie. They wanted the whites to have the privilege of digging the gold, but they wanted the game.

"On the 22nd the 'talk' was continued. The following complaints were made against the agent on the Uintah reservation at Uintah:

- 1st. Failure on the part of the government to fulfill the promises made to the Indians.
- 2nd. The title to their country still good, though much of it had been sold by government.
- 3rd. The supplies furnished by the government in goods and rations insufficient.
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"The Indians go to their reservations forthwith, and have agreed not to leave without permission of their agents.

"General Morrow goes further south, to bring into subjection the hostile Indians."

The following story of Tabby is copied from the History of Wasatch County, on file in the office of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers:

"The Center and Wallsburg people were ordered to move to Heber and the Charleston people to move to Midway, the new locations of the two Snake Creek settlements, which were kept up for two years until the war with the Indians was over. On the 27th of May, 1866, a company of twenty-four men under Captain William M. Wall, with three wagons loaded with supplies, started for the reservation. This company took about a hundred head of beef cattle as a present from President Young to be given to the Indians as a peace offering if they would accept them and stop the war. If they would not, the cattle were to be given to them anyway, and the Indians were to be told that the Mormons wanted peace and did not want to kill any of the Indians, but wanted to be good friends.

"One morning we saw the Indians moving in among the cedars and finally came to a standstill. Chief Tabby then sent an Indian to tell us he was coming quickly with ten or twelve Indians, and that he could not stop them from shooting until we were all killed. We told him to tell Tabby that we were ready and if they came to fight we would shoot them. There were two hundred and seventy-five Indians close by who circled around the agent's cabin a few feet away. Tabby got off his horse and went into the cabin. While he was in there an Indian shouted and all the other Indians ran into the cedars again. Captain Wall then said:

"I'll go to the other cabin and talk to Tabby and don't any of you go out while I am gone, and do not let any Indians come in here."

"He talked for three hours with the Indian Chief and agreed to meet him again the next morning to decide whether they were to have peace or war. The next morning Tabby brought some Indians with him and Captain Wall talked with them nearly all day. Finally Tabby said he would make peace if we would kill a man in Sanpete named Sloan. Wall would not agree to this and after some more talk he agreed to take the cattle and make peace as far as he was concerned.

"That evening it was my turn to stand guard and the Indians began to shout and yell as they stood around their camp fire and they all seemed to be very much excited. I reported to Captain Wall that the Indians surely

intended to kill us. When Tabby heard this he went to their camp fire and said:

"What's the matter with you Indians—you know I have made peace with the Mormons—stop your shouting."

"He told us when we started home to keep right in the wagon road and go as quickly as possible as he was afraid his Indians might shoot us as he could hardly restrain them right there.

"When we got home we learned that the people had become alarmed on account of our long absence. A company had been formed and was ready to start out to find us as agreed upon before we left Heber, should we not return in a reasonable time. We had been gone twelve days. Our men at that time risked their lives, but all proved brave and true. Colonel Head, Indian Agent, went out with us and he rather encouraged the Indians in not taking the cattle as a present from Brigham Young and even tried to buy the cattle for the government."

Another thing that caused anxiety in the minds of the people in Heber while these men were gone was this: On their way out they had stopped to eat in Strawberry Valley and had tied their horses with the saddles on them to trees with their guns fastened to the saddles. One horse tried to roll over and the gun was discharged, the bullet killing one horse and wounding another in the shoulder so it could not be used. The horse was turned loose and in a day or two returned to Heber in that condition. Not knowing how it happened, some naturally thought we had been attacked by the Indians and might all have been killed. The horse went home alone and was known to belong to John Acomb.

Chief Tabby probably did what he could to restrain the Indians, but the young Indian warriors preferred to follow Black Hawk and kept on with the stealing and killing for two more years.

Indian difficulties continued. In 1867 Bishop Joseph S. Murdock managed in some way to get in touch with Tabby and a few of the minor chiefs and invited them to come to Heber to sign a peace treaty. Tabby, Douglass, Tokowaner, and some of the other Indians came bringing with them their squaws and papooses. An ox was killed and divided among them and a big feast was prepared in a bowery built on the lot owned later by Elizabeth Carroll. They all seemed to enjoy the feast and went back to the reservation with good feeling, carrying with them part of the beef, flour, bacon, and other good things. It is believed that this gathering had a good influence in helping the Indians to be more friendly with the white people in this valley, as few, if any raids were made after that.

It had always been the policy of President Brigham Young to "Better feed the Indians than fight them." However, there were seventy white persons killed during the war with the Indians, and there was probably more than that number of Indians.

Tabby died a very old man on November 22, 1903, at White Rocks Agency.—*Daughters of Utah Pioneer Files.*

CHIEF POCATELLO

Among the well known tribes of Indians are the Bannocks of the west, who resided along the valley of the Portneuf River in southeastern Idaho.

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Utah. The earliest white presence of Indians in this region. In 1851 James W. Wadsworth, a settler in the area southwest of Salt Lake City, wrote to the U.S. Army stating, "The mountain game all belong to the Indians. They have a sense of land ownership and will not allow any animals found inside their territory." rabbits, antelope, and

The first attempt to establish a reservation in the Utah-Nevada border area was made in 1863, when the BIA instructed the local agents to encourage them to give up their land. This was consistent with the policy of removing all Indians.⁹ To remove them was advocated by the BIA asked William Lee Iapah where a larger reservation could be even if it meant moving them. The BIA recognized that the barrier was a larger Goshute territory. So, on his own, he set aside some agricultural land along Hickman Creek in Skull Valley for approximately fifty Goshutes.¹⁰



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⁹"Hiram Wallace Severe," pp. 1, 3, MS. Document Ms.D. 3591, LDS Church Library-Archives, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰"Biography of William Lee," p. 3, MS A-670, Utah State Historical Society Library, Salt Lake City.

¹¹"Reminiscence of Pioneer John Alexander Bevan," p. 1, MS, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Museum, Salt Lake City.

¹²"Deep Creek Branch (Indian Mission)," p. 4, MS. Document CR mh 2180, LDS Church Library-Archives.

¹³Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), vol. 1, p. 377.

¹⁴"Hiram Wallace Severe," pp. 3-4; "Biography of William Lee," p. 3. Although the Goshutes spoke out effectively against removal, the sources do not name individual Indians who opposed removal in the nineteenth century. Most likely the white Americans who wrote the letters and other documents could not accurately pronounce or spell Indian names and therefore did not bother to identify Goshutes by name.



Tabby, leader of the Skull Valley band of Goshutes. Photograph from History of Tooele County.

So strongly were the Skull Valley and other Goshute bands tied to their native homeland that they delineated their tribal territory in a treaty negotiated with federal officials in 1863. Although this treaty was primarily a pact of "peace and friendship," it had provisions relating to the Goshute land base. In Article 5 the Goshute bands "described" and "defined" the territory they had "occupied" and "claimed" as their birthright. This area consisted of a sizable portion of western Utah, including Skull Valley. Article 6 specified that the Goshute bands would resettle on reservations set aside for them by the federal government at a later date. On these reserves they would be taught how to farm and be required to give up their traditional hunting and gathering lifestyle. The treaty did not specify where future reservations would be established, inside or outside the Goshute treaty territory. Nevertheless, the treaty, negotiated in Tooele Valley, about twenty-five miles east of Skull Valley, was signed on October 12, 1863, by various Goshute band leaders, including Tabby, the leader of the Skull Valley band.¹¹

Contrary to the 1863 Goshute treaty, the federal government in the nineteenth century had no intention of establishing reservations for

¹¹13 Stat. 681-684.

